

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
EXTENSION SERVICE
Washington 25, D. C.

September 10, 1947
For your information

TO STATE FARM LABOR SUPERVISORS OF FLORIDA, GEORGIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, NORTH CAROLINA, VIRGINIA, MARYLAND, DELAWARE, PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, CONNECTICUT, TENNESSEE, AND OHIO

Subject: Atlantic Coast Migratory Movement

FROM GAINESVILLE TO ITHACA

As this letter is written, the only major migrant farm labor shortage in the Atlantic Coast region is in New York. Pennsylvania could use a few more crews than may be in sight at the moment. Right now it looks as though supply and demand may remain pretty well balanced. Maryland and Virginia report small surpluses, but they will be absorbed by later demands or the crews will move back towards Florida.

We took a telephone excursion this morning to the Carolinas and Florida to see what the prospects for fall work might be.

North Carolina will have no fall work to offer to migrants returning to Florida.

South Carolina has cotton picking jobs now on U.S. Routes 15 and 301 in the following counties: Marlboro, Dillon, Darlington, Florence, Sumter, and Orangeburg. Wages run from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per 100 pounds. Private housing is available and work for crew leaders consists of some truck hire, weighing cotton, and checking pickers. A few crews will be needed to pick beans about October 10-15.

The season is late in Florida due to wet weather and field work in truck crops will be delayed. Citrus work will not be available before October 15. Andersen says that crews returning before that date will not find much work. He reports that county agents are very much pleased over the number of crew record slips now being received from northern States and are using them to plan the earliest possible placement of crews returning to Florida.

IN THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC AREA

Maryland has about 2,500 migrants this week, about 500 being housed in camps and the remainder in private housing. The Lower Shore has finished tomatoes. Bean picking is slack due to a weak market. As a result there are about 150 migrants in the Pocomoke Camp without work. A few crews are returning to Florida. An effort is being made to send these crews to New York, but at the same time a few crews have returned to Maryland from New York. The main reasons given were that pay was unsatisfactory and no work was provided for crew leaders. These are isolated cases as there is still plenty of work in New York at good wages. Bill Hillman would like to hear from Florida agents

who can use crews now so that he can direct returning crew leaders to jobs in Florida. Maryland would like to return favors received from Florida agents earlier in the season.

Pennsylvania reports about 625 migrants now working in 10 southeastern counties. Seventy-five migrants are now in Potter County picking beans and will be held over for potato picking. By about September 29, the total need for potato pickers will have built up to about 350 in Potter County. Nealy and Atkinson report that satisfactory housing has been provided by growers. Wages will be 9 cents per bushel to pickers and 5 cents per bushel for crew leaders who load and haul potatoes from the field to farm graders or storage. For longer hauls, additional remuneration may be arranged. Atkinson thinks that with the continued good cooperation from New Jersey in referring crews, that Pennsylvania's problems will be met on schedule. A few good small fruit picking crews could be used.

New Jersey potato harvest should begin to taper off by the end of this week, although recent rains have slowed down digging. Several crews have already finished and have moved on to New York and Pennsylvania. By the end of next week, it is anticipated that workers will be ready to move from New Jersey into New York. Other crews will be starting back to Florida after their New Jersey contracts are completed. Farm labor assistants, Mundy and Perrine, have done a fine job in getting crew records on a majority of crews in New Jersey.

New York still needs more migrant labor. New crews are arriving, but other crews are leaving. Demand is increasing for pickers for apples, pears, peaches, and tomatoes. Growers are offering 12 cents a bushel for apple and peach pickers. Crews with tree experience can find good employment. Tomato harvest is under way with wage rates of 8 cents per bushel and 70 cents per hour in processing plants. More labor would be available and stay on the job longer if more work was offered for crew leaders and their trucks, or if crew leaders could be satisfied with other seasonable offers. Crews do not like to be broken up this time of the year when they are dependent upon the crew leader to transport them back to Florida. As a consequence, the demand for small groups of workers in New York constitutes a major problem.

Virginia reports indicate that the use of migrant labor in Accomac and Northampton Counties is at a temporary standstill. There were 50 migrants in the Accomac Camp on September 6, and about 85 workers are expected to move in this week. By September 20, about 200 workers will be needed to harvest fall snap beans. About 250 workers will be needed in the Cheriton Camp and an additional 100 workers in growers' quarters in the Cheriton area to harvest beans about October 1. The Cheriton Camp will be operated by the Northampton County Farm Bureau, Inc. upon its reopening October 1.

PERSONALITIES IN THE NEWS

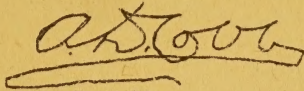
The schedule for O. W. Nealy has been revised so that he will remain in New York this week. He will return to New Jersey next week to assist with referrals of crews to areas of need as they complete potato harvest contracts. He will then return to New York to help carry out the guidance program planned for directing the orderly return of crews to Florida and other southern points.

Merle Stout, who has been doing field work with migrants all season from Florida to New York, has been placed in charge of the Cutchogue Labor Camp on Long Island.

H. O. Andersen will work in Florida for the balance of the season, arranging placements for crews returning to Florida and giving some special attention to replacements for foreign workers who have been working in sugar cane, and who may now be repatriated.

C. W. E. Pittman and Barnard Joy were in North Carolina, September 9, for a conference with Fred Sloan and his associates. In between engagements "Pitt" is trying to pay some attention to his accumulated annual leave account.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A. D. Cobb", is written over a horizontal line.

A. D. Cobb
Northeastern Area Director
Recruitment and Placement Division
Extension Farm Labor Program

